RAJYA SABHA

Tuesday, the 13th May, 1997/
23 Vaisakha, 1919 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the Clock, **Mr. Chairman** *in the Chair.*

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

*521. *[The Questioner (Smt. Malti Sharma) was absent for answer vide col. 28 infra]*

*522. *[The Questioner (Shri Virendra Kataria) was absent for answer vide col. 29 infra]*

Opening of Mass Communication Centre in North-East Region

*523. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for opening a Mass Communication Centre in the North-East Region; and

(b) whether the State Institute of Journalism now can be directed by the Publicity Department of Manipur for upgrading to the level of Regional Mass Communication Centre for the North-East Region?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) A branch of Indian institute of Mass Communication is being set up at Dimapur, Nagaland, in the North-East Region

(b) The matter concerns the State Government

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister is not used to reading out; always makes extempore speeches.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: He is an expert in the Opposition; not in the ruling party.

AN. HON. MEMBER: Everywhere.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, Mr. Angou Singh, please put you first supplementary.

SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, my question was: 'whether there is any proposal for opening a Mass Communication Centre in the North-East Region'. The Minister has said in his reply that a branch of Indian Institute of Mass Communication is being set up at Dimapur, Nagaland, in the North-East Region.

In this connection, I would like to point out that we have a State Institute of Journalism set up at Manipur by the State Government. More than 50 publications in Manipuri and English are brought out daily in the state.

This Institute was set up with a view to guiding the pressmen properly in journalistic ethics. But is will greatly help to meet the present situation in this region. My supplementary is whether this State Institute of Journalism which is already functioning can be converted into a branch of the Indian Institute of Mass Communication by the Government of India.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, in the North-East, we have already set up a Branch of the Indian Institute of Mass Communication at Dimapur. The Government of Nagaland has allotted 35 acres of land. Now it is too late in the day to think of shifting the Branch from Dimapur to any other place. There can be only one Branch in the North-East. There cannot be two Branches. As per the request of the Member, it should be referred to the North-Eastern Regional Council. This matter can be taken up there. But the Branch as such cannot be shifted from Dimapur.

SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Sir, my demand is that it should be shifted to

Manipur. The Institute is already there, but it is conducted with a meagre amount being provided by the State Government. Can it be converted, or can some assistance be given to the Institute which is already there? This is my question.

There is some mistake here. Part (b) of the question states :"whether the State Institute of Journalism now can be directed...." It should not be "directed." It should be, "conducted by the Publicity Department of Manipur." This has been wrongly written here. So, the answer is, "The matter concerns the State Government." This is also wrong. My question is whether the State Institute of Journalism conducted by the Department of Publicity of Manipur can be upgraded to the level of Regional Mass Communication Centre for the North-East. This has also been wrongly worded. So, the answer is that the matter concerns the State Government. But, will be hon. Minister clarify whether this existing State Institute of Journalism conducted by the Publicity Department can be extended some assistance from the Government of India?

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, courses are offered in Journalism in every State. The Central Government cannot extend assistance in such matters.

We have a premier institute called the "Indian Institute of Mass Communication." We have Regional Branches of the same in some parts of the country, like

श्रीमती वीणा वर्मा: सभापति महोदय, मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहती हूं कि अब सिर्फ जन संचार माध्यम ही एवं माध्यम नहीं रह गया है, जो जनता को सूचना देता है या शिक्षा देता है। जन संचार माध्यम का उद्देश्य यही था कि मास कम्युनिकेशन, बड़े स्तर पर लोगों को सूचना दे, उन्हें शिक्षित करे, लेकिन अब एक मीडिया, जिसमें कम्प्युटर, इंटरनेट और कम्युनिकेशन बहुत सारा संचार का भी एक स्रोत बन गया है आपको सूचना पहुंचाने का। तो पहला जैसा हमारे माननीय सदस्य ने पूछा मीडिया सेंटर खोलने के लिए आपको, तो क्या आप मास कम्युनिकेशन छोटे-छोटे कम्युनिकेशन सेंटर की जगह पूरा मीडिया सेंटर खोलेंगें, जिसमें कम्प्युटर ट्रेनिंग भी इन्वल्यूड्ड हो? मैंने मध्य प्रदेश के बिलासपुर जिले में एक मास कम्युनिकेशन सेंटर का लिखा था कि सरकार वहां इसे खोले, लेकिन मास कम्युनिकेशन सेंटर से जवाब आया कि पत्रकारिता का एक केन्द्र भोपाल में खुला हुआ है इसलिए आवश्यक नहीं है और झाबुआ में कर रहे हैं। सर, बिलासपुर एक ट्रायबल बेकवर्ड जिला है, एक तो पहली मांग मेरी यह है कि क्या सरकार वहां पर एक मीडिया सेन्टर की शुरुआत करेगा? दूसरी यह कि पत्रकारिता जहां भी शुरु है, जो आपके सेंटर हैं पत्रकारिता के या विश्वविद्यालय में, जहां सिर्फ पत्रकारिता सिखाते हैं... सिर्फ पत्रकारिता, प्रिंट मीडिया लेते है, लेकिन मीडिया सैंटर ऐज़ ए कम्युनिकेशन देने का पूरा-पूरा, कम्प्यूटर, इंटरनेट व कम्युनिकेशन, प्रिंट मीडिया, इन तीनों को इस तरह से बड़ा करेंगे या नहीं? और आजकल आपका मास कम्युनिकेशन का सबसे ज्यादा ऐम है कि रेडियों और दूरदर्शन के लोगों को आप पत्रकारिता, जनरलिज्म के कोर्स की ट्रेनिंग देते हैं मास कम्युनिकेशन सेंटर से।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

श्रीमती वीणा वर्मा: सर, बहुत बड़ी मांग है खास तौर से रेडियों के पैक्स और ट्रैक्स को कम्प्यूटर ट्रेनिंग देने की, तो उनको कम्प्यूटर ट्रेनिंग दिलवाइए आप।

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, the question primarily relate to the North-Eastern region, but I would like to answer it. We have no proposal to open media centres. There are many other ways in which the new media training can be obtained. The question is about the Indian Institute of Mass Communication. It is India's premier institute. It has done a great service. It also imparts instructions in new and modern media.

SHRI VIZOL: Sir, I would like to know whether the North-East Cultural Centre at Dimapur is a Centrally-funded institution. Is it supervised by the State Government or is it directly handled by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting?

2290/RS/13

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, this branch is directly under the control of the Government of India. The State Government came forward to offer a plot of 35 acres of land but there are some problems in taking it over. As and when it is set up, it will be completely under the direct control of the Government of India. In the current year we have made a provision of Rs. 35 lakhs in the Budget for this branch.

SHRI VIZOL: Sir, this North-East Cultural Centre has been working for more than a decade, but it is still not known to the people of Nagaland. I hope the Government will create some mechanism to supervise the institution in order to improve its working. Sir, people hardly know where it is and what it is doing. My colleague, Mr. Angou Singh has also raised this question.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, there seems to be some confusion here. He is mistaking the branch of the Indian Institute of Mass Communication for the Cultural Centre there. This was a proposal started only last year. We have not been able to make a big beginning. The Cultural Centre is different from the branch of this Institute.

श्री नरेन्द्र मोहन: सभापति जी, माननीय मंत्री जी ने सब कुछ रीजनल काउंसिल के कंधों पर डालने की कोशिश की है, जबकि हकीकत यह है कि पूर्वोत्तर क्षेत्र भारत का जो है, वह राष्ट्र विरोधी गतिविधियों का केन्द्र बन गया है और राष्ट्रीय एकता के लिए आज जितना खतरा पूर्वोत्तर क्षेत्र में है, उतना देश में कहीं नहीं है। ऐसी स्थिति में जन संचार का जो आपका केन्द्र है उसकी एक विशेष भूमिका हो जाती है। उसकी भूमिका हो जाती है कि वह राष्ट्र की समस्याओं के प्रति वहां के जनसाधारण को अवगत कराए। उसकी भूमिका हो जाती है कि जनसाधारण को राष्ट्रीय एकता के महत्व का परिचय दे। आपने जो केन्द्र स्थापित किया है ...(व्यवधान)...

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Why are you generalising it? Kindly put a question.

श्री नरेन्द्र मोहन: मेरा प्रश्न यह है कि जो जन संचार माध्यम का केन्द्र आपने स्थापित किया है, उसका मूल उद्देश्य क्या केवल कुछ नौकरियों की व्यवस्था कर देना है या उसका उद्देश्य यह भी है कि वह क्षेत्रीय जनता को राष्ट्रीय एकता से जुड़े महत्वपूर्ण प्रश्नों से भी अवगत कराए। यह जो जन संचार केन्द्र आप बनाने जा रहे हैं, क्या यह वहां के पत्रकारों को और जो दूसरे व्यक्ति रेडियो में जाना चाहते हैं या टेलीविजन में जाना चाहते हैं, क्या यह उन्हें प्रशिक्षित भी करेगा? आखिर इसका मूल उद्देश्य क्या है? क्या राष्ट्र की समस्याओं के प्रति जागरूकता लाना उसका उद्देश्य है या नहीं?

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I share the concern of the hon. Member about the situation in the North-East. But I would like to bring to his notice, through you, that this branch of the Indian Institute of Mass Communication is meant to provide to students courses in mass communication is meant to provide to students courses in mass communication in journalism and new techniques of modern media and to provide refresher training courses to officers of the Publicity Department in the North-East Region. This is not a centre for publicity. This is a centre for training.

SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Minister in his reply has stated that there cannot be any change in the vocation of the Mass Media Centre. The first part of my question is: May I know from the Minister whether here are any norms which prohibit you om spreading it to other parts of the egion? Many people here, particularly, in the Government know that the North-East comprises as many as eight States and Guwahati is the larger centre of all the North-Eastern centres. Considering all these, would the Minister inform the House-of course, he is deputising for the Communication Minister and we are sure that he would inform his colleague about this can--whether any steps are being taken to establish one meaningful centre at Guwahati?

The second part of my question arises out of the Minister's reference to the assistance given to the North-Eastern Council for some organisation of this type in Dimapur. I am very sorry to say that

the people of Assam, the people of North-Eastern Region have very little to be proud of any benefits out of the North-Eastern Council.

My learned friend from the other side stated that the North-East has become the nerve centre of all rebellious activities. Being a very senior freedom fighter, I take very serious objection to this. He cannot simply generalise that all people in the North-East are insurgents.

SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Sir, I never meant that. I am being quoted wrongly. I never said that all people in the North-East are insurgents. I said that three is insurgency in the North-East. That is what I said. I also said that the Mass Communication Centre must make an attempt to educate the people of that region.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is a premier institute. It can't have too many branches all over the country. But this institute took the initiative to set up a branch at Dimapur. We would like to make earnest efforts to start the branch. Without making earnest efforts, we can't think of shifting it. As for Guwahati and other places, we may be able to consider it in due course. But at this particular point of time, the question does not arise.

*524. [*The Questioner (Shri Prem Chand Gupta) was absent for answer vide col. 30 infra*]

*525. *The Question (Shri Yerra Narayanaswamy) was absent for answer vide col. 31 infra*]

Advisory Committee to amend Article 356 of the Constitution

*526. SHRI BANGARU LAXMAN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to states:

(a) whether Government propose to form an Advisory Committee consisting of members for different political parties to suggest recommendations/suggestions to amend Article 356 of the Constitution of India;

(b) if so, the details of its constitution and terms of reference; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP): (a) to (c): The Standing Committee of the Inter-State Council is examining the question of amendment of article 356 of the Constitution of India. Keeping in view the composition of the Standing Committee and of the Inter-State Council, it is not considered necessary to form an Advisory Committee consisting of members of different political parties to make suggestions/recommendations in regard to the amendment of the said article.

SHRI BANGARU LAXMAN: Sir, there seems to be two stands being taken by the Government. On 25th February, in the present Session which commenced sometime in the month of February, the Home Minister, while replying to the supplementaries in the Lok Sabha, stated that the Central Government is considering forming a Committee consisting of Members of different political parties to consider the proposed amendments to Article 356. Today, the Minister says that keeping in view the composition of the Inter-State Council and of the Standing Committee, it has been felt that there is no need for a Committee of Members of different political parties. Is there a change in the Government's decision? Or, Was it the decision of the earlier Government, because, on 25th February, Shri Deve Gowda's Goverment was there, and today, there is a different Government, though the Home Minister and the Law Minister did not change? So, what exactly has happened? Whether that proposal was considered or not, or whether the Government is only depending upon the Report of the Inter-State Council's Standing Committee--that is part (a).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Second supplementary you can seek later on.